

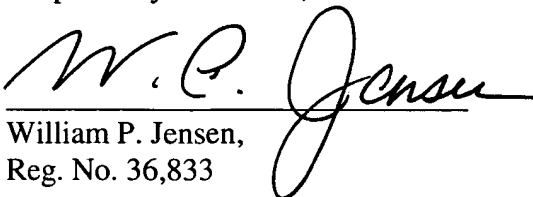
**RESPONSE**

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 121, claims 1-53 are presented under the Amendment of Claims. Claims 44-53 are new and are presented in response to the Examiner's December 30, 2003 Office Action indicating that claims 28-32 and 38-42 "... would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." The Examiner's rejection of claims 1-27, 33-37 and 43 will be addressed in a separate supplemental response.

On January 22, 2004, Applicants' undersigned representative interviewed Examiners McCartney and his supervisor, Zimmerman. As noted in the attached Interview Summary, Examiner Zimmerman confirmed that the claims submitted with the September 15, 2003 Response and Amendment would be marked "do not enter," and that the references cited in the Second Supplemental IDS filed May 9, 2002 and again on September 15, 2003 would be noted as considered.

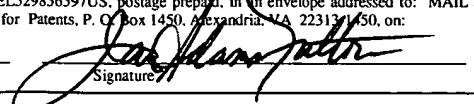
Based upon this Response and Amendment, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 44-53 are patentably distinguished from the prior art and respectfully request allowance of the same. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional amount required, or credit any overpayment, to Account No. 19-2112. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Date: June 30, 2004

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| CERTIFICATE OF MAILING<br>37 C.F.R. 1.08  |   |
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| I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as Express Mail, mailing label EL529856597US, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: MAIL STOP RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on: |   |
| June 30, 2004<br>Date   | <br>Signature |